FTSW Abstract/Proposal Requirements/Recommendations/Desirements

The Flight Test Safety Workshop does not require "formal abstracts," and formal "paper" submissions are not required - a presentation is sufficient. Additionally, if your organization prefers, your presentation/paper/submission can be withheld from distribution (e.g., posting on Flight Test Safety Committee web site) and recording of the presentation can either be prohibited (prior to) or withheld from distribution (after recording), at the discretion of the presenter or presenters' sponsoring organization. FTSW podcasts are posted to the FTSC website only with permission of the presenter.

To be considered for the Flight Test Safety Workshop, please submit 2-5 paragraphs describing:

Who, What, When, Where, Why and How…
Who is presenting, who did an event affect or happen to? (including host organization or REDACTED).
What was the test article and what happened, or what are you proposing we change?
When (approximately) did it occur (usually less important for the abstract than the presentation)
Where (approximately) did it occur (usually less important for the abstract than the presentation)
Why did this happen, why is it important or why do you propose we change _____?
How did you accomplish something, discover an issue, solve a problem, achieve a milestone, etc???

We do not require nor need the full body or a percentage of your presentation or paper; you may continue revising your materials until the day before you present (if selected)…sometimes updates can be accommodated the morning of presentation. There is no required manuscript format; Other than a 25 minute time limit, there are no requirements for the charts/presentation (several years ago, a presentation was delivered with NO charts!). Video can be accommodated and is encouraged for effect.

The Flight Test Safety Committee (and affiliated organizations SETP and SFTE) leave it to the presenter to obtain any and all authorizations for presentation/release from the appropriate parties (host company, government entity, legal owner of any intellectual property, etc.).

Style Points:

Subject matter should be of interest to the Flight Test Community, especially those who wish to improve Flight Test Safety, those who can mentor or advise individuals or Flight Test Organizations. Examples include new methods that improve safety/efficiency, near-misses, incidents, accidents and proverbial "lessons learned." Status reports are welcome – especially if there is a time sensitive safety issue that the community should be aware of. Program overviews or sales pitches *may* be accepted – we'd prefer safety and safety improvement subject matter. If your "customer" desires some information to be withheld (e.g., "aircraft type," location, legal status) we can work with this – we are interested in improving safety industrywide; our reputation of providing a non-attributional environment and respecting proprietary or sensitive information sets this Workshop apart from similar industry meetings.

While this Workshop has a "theme," it is not necessary that your presentation/paper be directly related to or applicable to the theme…there are however points awarded in presentation judging for "relevance to the Workshop Theme." If you do not wish for your presentation to be judged, we will respect that thorough judging & optional feedback by selected Flight Test Professionals is provided to facilitate an award for best presentation of this Workshop.

We look forward to hearing from you!

Generic Example:

When Configuration Leads to Aircraft Upset: Pete Preposterous from [REDACTED] will present background information on how a GENERIC TRANSPORT AIRCRAFT experienced an inflight upset, how a configuration change affected the event and steps that were taken going forward to prevent reoccurrence.

Video and data will be shared (but cannot be released) from the Test Campaign conducted in 2000 from [REDACTED].

For those that wish guidance to submit a more "formal" abstract, see references below.

12 points used in the Selection Process

During the abstract selection process the following 12 points are used as a guide. We strongly recommend that you ensure your abstract satisfies these points.

1. Does the abstract capture the interest of a potential reader of the paper?
2. Is the abstract well written in terms of language, grammar, etc.?
3. Does the abstract engage the reader by telling him or her what the paper is about and why they should read it?
4. Does the abstract title describe the subject being written about?
5. Does the abstract make a clear statement of the topic of the paper and the research question?
6. Does the abstract say how the research was/is being undertaken?
7. Does the abstract indicate the value of the findings and to whom will they be of use?
8. Does the abstract describe the work to be discussed in the paper?
9. Does the abstract give a concise summary of the findings?
10. Does the abstract conform to the word limit of 300 words?
11. Does the abstract have between 5 and 10 keywords or phrases that closely reflect the content of the paper?
12. Should the abstract be accepted?

Authors who do not follow these guidelines are more likely to have their work rejected.

Learning how to write an abstract for a conference is a matter of following a simple formula for success. Here it is.

Learning how to write an abstract for a conference is a critical skill for early-career researchers. The purpose of an abstract is to summarise – in a single paragraph – the major aspects of the paper you want to present, so it's important you learn to write a complete but concise abstract that does your conference paper justice.

Your conference abstract is often the only piece of your work that conference organisers will see, so it needs to be strong enough to stand alone. And once your work is accepted or published, researchers will only consider attending your presentation or reading the rest of your paper if your abstract compels them to.

So learning how to write an abstract well is pretty important. Happily, while every research discipline varies, most successful abstracts follow a similar formula.

The formula for how to write an abstract

When considering how to write an abstract, follow this formula: **topic + title + motivation + problem statement + approach + results + conclusions = conference abstract**

Here's the formula in more detail. Adapt it as you need to fit your research discipline.

1. Abstract topic

How will your abstract convince the conference organisers that you'll add to the discussion on a particular topic at their event? Your conference presentation will have limited scope, so choose an angle that fits the conference topics and consider your abstract through that lens.

2. Abstract title

What is your conference paper about and what makes it interesting? A good rule of thumb is to give your abstract a title of 12 words or less.

3. Motivation

Why should your readers care about the problem and your results? This section should include the background to your research, the importance of it, and the difficulty of the area.

4. The problem

What problem are you trying to solve? Are you using a generalised approach, or is it for a specific situation? (If the problem your research addresses is widely recognised, include this section before motivation.) Clearly state the topic of your paper and your research question in this section.

5. Study design

How did you approach solving the problem or making progress on it? How did you design your study? What was the extent of your research?

6. Predictions and results

What findings or trends did your analysis uncover? Were they as you expected, or not?
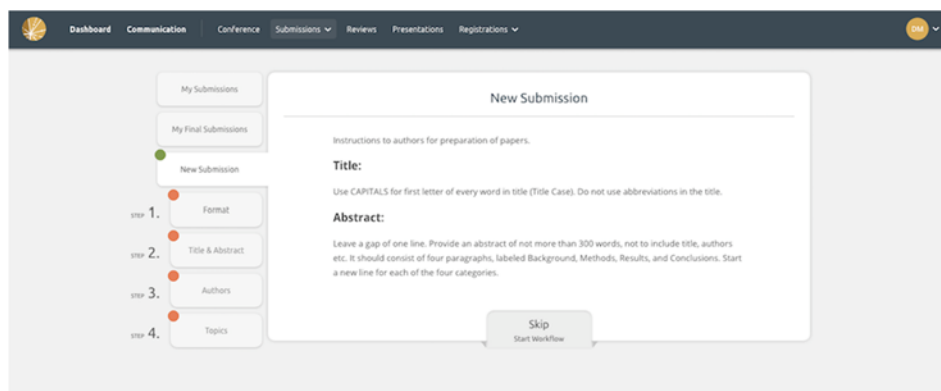
7. Conclusions

What do your results mean? How will they contribute to your field? Will they shake things up, speed things up, or simply show other researchers that this specific area may be a dead end. Are your results general (or generalisable) or highly specific?

Tips for writing a successful conference abstract

Conference organisers usually have more submissions than presentation slots, so use these tips to improve the chances your abstract is successful.

Follow the conference abstract guidelines

Submission guidelines on [Ex Ordo abstract management software](#)

Double-check the conference guidelines for abstract style and spacing. You'll usually find these in a guide for authors on the conference's abstract management software or on the conference

website. Although they're usually pretty standard, some conferences have specific formatting guidelines. And you need to follow them to a T.

Carefully select your abstract keywords

Abstract keywords help other researchers find your work once it's published, and lots of conferences request that authors provide these when they submit. These should be the words that most accurately reflect the content of your paper.

Find example abstracts

Familiarise yourself with conference abstracts in the wild. Get your hands on the conference book of abstracts from previous years – if you can't find it online, your supervisor may have a copy lying about. Look for examples of abstracts submitted by early-career researchers especially, and try to pinpoint what made each one successful.

Edit with fresh eyes

Once you've written your abstract, give yourself at least a day away from it. Editing it with fresh eyes can help you be more objective in deciding what's essential.

Cut filler and jargon

Space is limited, so be as concise as you can by cutting words or phrases that aren't necessary. Keep sentences short enough that you can read them aloud without having to pause for breath. And steer clear of jargon that's specific to one field – especially if you're submitting to an interdisciplinary conference.

Submit early

Conferences organisers often begin reviewing abstracts before the submissions deadline arrives, and they're often swamped with submissions right before the deadline. Submit your abstract well before the deadline and you may help your chances of being accepted.

Submit often

As an early-career researcher, conferences are often the first place you'll have your work published, so conference abstracts are a great place to learn. The more abstracts you write and submit, the better you'll get at writing them. So keep trying. Subscribe to PaperCrowd to find suitable conferences to submit to.

Sources on how to write an abstract for specific fields

How to write an abstract for humanities or social sciences conference

Catherine Baker has written a great piece about [answering a conference call for papers](#).

Helen Kara on the LSE Blog writes about the [differences between conference abstracts and abstracts for journals](#).

How to write an abstract for a scientific conference

Chittaranjan Andrade writes in the Indian Journal of Psychiatry on how to write a good [scientific abstract for a conference presentation](#).

This piece from BioScience Writers gives some good tips on [writing about scientific research](#).

How to write a computer architecture abstract

The "how to write an abstract" formula above was adapted from this [excellent piece by Phillip Koopman](#).

How to write an abstract when you're an early-career researcher

This post from Ruth Fillery-Travis gives the perspective [of writing an abstract when you're an early-career researcher](#).

This post from Kristina Kasparian gives some great pointers on [how NOT to write an abstract.](#)

Dee McCurry

Dee moved back from London to help Ex Ordo tell their story. Although she finds it tough to find turmeric lattes and other hipster nonsense in Galway, she enjoys writing about the weird and wonderful world of research conferences.

Ex Ordo

Abstract Management

Collect abstracts and papers, allocate reviews, accept and register participants.

@exordo